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**AFGHANISTAN**

## SNAPSHOT

# Pomegranates Find Niche in India

**Afghan farmers have found a lucrative market for their pomegranates in India**



Photo: USAID/ASAP

*Afghanistan's pomegranates are on display at a trade show in India in 2010.*

***As a result of USAID's support, the hard work of the Afghan farmers, and the high quality of Afghanistan's produce, the country's pomegranates have found a niche in India and market share is expected to grow at a rapid pace.***

Like many other Afghan pomegranate farmers, Haji Wali Muhammad sold his pomegranates on the local market but did not receive a price that would make his Kandahar-based trading business sustainable. He and other Afghan producers needed to increase the quality of their pomegranates through proper sorting, grading, and packing procedures and to find outside markets that would offer a competitive price for Afghanistan's sweet and juicy pomegranates.

In order to provide more opportunities to farmers like Haji Muhammad and to increase the reach of Afghanistan's famous pomegranates, USAID studied neighboring regions and identified India as a lucrative market for Afghan pomegranates. Afghanistan had exported a large portion of its produce to India three decades ago, but the market linkages were lost after years of conflict. During this time, the Indian economy swelled, and the country emerged as a major consumer.

USAID organized a trade mission in 2009 to India for Haji Muhammad and other Afghan fresh fruit and dried fruit producers. The mission generated substantial trade inquiries and export orders for Afghan growers and producers.

"I sold my first shipment of pomegranates to India in 2009, and I was happy to sell my produce at a 50 percent higher margin," said Haji Muhammad, who now sells to India on a regular basis.

USAID provided Haji Muhammad and other producers with the required technical support on grading, sorting, packaging, and branding as well as assistance in fulfilling the orders from India. "I imported 100 metric tons of pomegranates from Afghanistan in 2009, and 10,000 metric tons in 2010," said Naveen, an Indian importer who has witnessed the surge in popularity of Afghan pomegranates in India.

With USAID support, Afghan producers are building profitable relationships with Indian buyers and selling their pomegranates in India at a competitive price.

USAID provides strategic support to public and private sectors nationwide with the overarching goals of improving agricultural production, increasing sales and exports, generating new jobs, and introducing modern agricultural technologies.